

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5323

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

ERDA GERMANTOWN

ERDA WASHDC

UNCLAS MOSCOW 3732

OES/APT/SEP FOR MORRIS

ERDA FOR HILL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TGEN, UR, US, ENRG

SUBJECT: US-USSR ENERGY AGREEMENT: GAS (08.05) US DELEGATION VISIT:
REPORT

REF: STATE 61309

1. DETAILED AIRGRAM ON SUBJECT IN PREPARATION, INCORPORATING COMMENTS OF AMCONGEN LENINGRAD.

2. TREATMENT. DELEGATION WAS GIVEN COURTEOUS AND OCCASIONALLY EVEN WARM RECEPTION BY SOVIET OFFICIALS. THERE WERE NO COMPLAINTS ON THIS SCORE FROM THE AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS. IN MOSCOW, SOVIET DEPUTY MINISTER OF GAS ZAYTSEV PARTICIPATED IN FIRST AND LAST SESSIONS, AS DID A. D. SEDYKH, CHIEF OF THE MINISTRY'S TECHNICAL ADMINISTRATION. DELEGATION WAS RECEIVED AT DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND DIRECTOR LEVEL, RESPECTIVELY, AT ALL-UNION SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE PIPE CONSTRUCTION AND ALL-UNION
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INSTITUTE OF THE GAS INDUSTRY. IN TYUMEN (CITY), WHERE THE CHIEF OF THE TYUMEN GAS INDUSTRY WAS NOT PRESENT, HIS DEPUTY, G. P. SULIMENKOV, WHO IS ALSO THE CHIEF ENGINEER OF THE INDUSTRY, LED TWO SESSIONS (BEFORE AND AFTER VISITS TO GASFIELDS). IN NADYM THERE WAS SOME ORIGINAL EVIDENCE OF COOLNESS TO DELEGATION, BUT THIS ATMOSPHERE IMPROVED, AND DIRECTOR OF LOCAL OPERATIONS THERE ON TWO OCCASIONS MADE

HIMSELF AVAILABLE FOR DISCUSSIONS. ON ALL OF THESE OCCASIONS, INCLUDING VISITS TO INSTALLATIONS LISTED BELOW, SOVIETS PRODUCED TECHNICAL PERSONNEL WHO GAVE USEFUL AND SEEMINGLY OPEN PRESENTATIONS. SOVIETS RESPONDED TO ALL QUESTIONS PUT TO THEM BY THE AMERICAN DELEGATION AND WERE CANDID IN DISCUSSING SOME OF THEIR PROBLEMS. SINCE US DELEGATION DID NOT HAVE SUBSTANTIAL EXPERIENCE IN GAS OPERATIONS IN ARCTIC CONDITIONS, MOST OF THE INFORMATION FLOW CAME FROM SOVIET SIDE.

3. ACCESS. THE DELEGATION REGARDED THE ACTUAL OBSERVATION OF FACILITIES IN NORTH TYUMEN (NADYM, MEDVEZHYE AND ORENGOY) AS THE CHIEF PURPOSE OF THE VISIT. HERE THERE WAS SOME DISSATISFACTION WITH THE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES, WHICH SOVIETS IN NADYM SAID WERE CIRCUMSCRIBED BY WEATHER CONDITIONS AND FACT THAT HELICOPTER TRANSPORT COULD BE PROVIDED ONLY UNTIL THREE P.M. (IN FACT, SOME HELICOPTERS DID OPERATE AT LATER HOURS). A VISIT TO ORENGOY WAS REMOVED FROM THE SCHEDULE WITHOUT EXPLANATION; DELEGATION INTERPRETER REPORTED HAVING BEEN TOLD ENROUTE THAT THERE WAS "NOTHING TO SHOW" IN ORENGOY. DELEGATION LEADER OPTED NOT TO CHALLENGE THIS DELETION. ON FIRST FULL DAY IN NADYM DELEGATION ACTUALLY VISITED AN OPERATING GAS WELL AND TWO GAS TREATMENT PLANTS IN MEDVEZHYE USING ADSORPTION AND ABSORPTION METHODS, RESPECTIVELY. FURTHER OBSERVATION (OF DRILLING ACTIVITY) HAD TO BE CANCELLED WHEN HELICOPTER CREW REPORTED APPROACH OF STORM FROM DIRECTION OF ARCTIC. (ALTHOUGH NO STORM DEVELOPED, WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT BONAFIDES OF THIS WARNING.) ON SECOND DAY IN NADYM DELEGATION OBSERVED UNCLASSIFIED

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WELDING OF PIPE IN NADYM, WELDING OF PIPELINE IN THE FIELD SOME 150 MILES TO THE WEST, A POWER DECOMPRESSION STATION AND A GAS COMPRESSOR STATION. SOME TIME ON FINAL DAY WAS DEVOTED TO TOUR OF SCHOOL AND CULTURAL FACILITIES IN NADYM, BUT THIS WAS PROGRAMMED AT AN HOUR AFTER WHICH HELICOPTERS WERE SAID NOT TO FLY. WE HAD IMPRESSION THAT MR. LEWIS WILLIAMS OF TENNECO OIL COMPANY IN PARTICULAR FELT THAT HE HAD NOT SEEN AS MUCH AS HE WOULD HAVE LIKED, SINCE NO DRILLING WAS OBSERVED. MR. JOHN PHILLIPS, THE DELEGATION LEADER, STATED THAT HE REGARDED THE OBSERVATION OF THE WELDING ACTIVITY TO HAVE BEEN HIS MAIN PURPOSE IN COMING TO THE USSR, BUT HIS PRIVATE VIEW OF THE QUALITY OF THE WORK WAS NOT HIGH. IN SUM, WE BELIEVE THAT IN ANY FUTURE VISIT MORE TIME SHOULD BE SET ASIDE FOR ACTUAL OBSERVATION IT AND AROUND NADYM.

4. RESULTS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE AMERICAN DELEGATION INTENDS TO SUBMIT A FULL REPORT ON ITS FINDINGS IN THE USSR. WE HAVE NOT YET SEEN THE REPORT, WHICH WAS STILL BEING

DRAFTED AT THE TIME THE DELEGATION LEFT THE USSR, BUT BELIEVE IT WILL BE POSITIVE. ALL-UNION INSTITUTE OF THE GAS INDUSTRY DIRECTOR KHUDYAKOV SPELLED OUT ORALLY A LIST OF FIFTEEN SPECIFIC POINTS WHERE FURTHER COOPERATION WOULD BE DESIRABLE, AND PHILLIPS AGREED TO TAKE THIS PROPOSAL TO US AUTHORITIES, BUT WE ARE NOT AWARE WHETHER SOVIETS SUBSEQUENTLY SUBMITTED THESE POINTS IN WRITING. DURING WRAP-UP SESSION ON MARCH 4, DEPT. MINISTER ZAYTSEV STATED THAT IT WOULD PERHAPS BE TIMELY TO DISCUSS PROGRAM OF FUTURE COOPERATION AT END OF 1977, AFTER US DELEGATION HAS HAD TIME TO THINK ABOUT ITS OBSERVATIONS AND AFTER A SOVIET DELEGATION WILL HAVE VISITED THE UNITED STATES. PHILLIPS RESPONDED TO THIS STATEMENT OF SOVIET VIEWS IN A FRIENDLY AND AFFIRMATIVE MANNER BUT MADE NO COMMITMENT OF ANY KIND.

5. REPORT UNDER PREPARATION COVERS SCOPE OF TYUMEN GAS PRODUCTION, PRIMARY FIELDS, CHIEF PROBLEMS, DRILLING, UNCLASSIFIED

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TREATMENT, PIPELINES, INFRASTRUCTURE, SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE; AND ADDITIONAL IMPRESSIONS OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF TRIP TO SOVIET FAR NORTH.
TOON

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